

MR. MONGER: They have it in every other colony in Australia.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: No, no.

MR. JAMES: I was under the impression that they have not such a law in every other colony. Three years ago the Act now sought to be repealed was introduced by the hon. member for York (Mr. Monger), who has had some experience in connection with racing matters. In speaking of the Bill in 1894, that hon. member said:—

And though the other colonies have not yet thought fit to go in for it—for what reason I can hardly say—I think if we in Western Australia adopt such a law, and exclude the professional bookmaker from our racecourses and other places of public resort, we shall be doing a kindness to the rising generation, and doing no injury to any class of the community. Absolutely no injury has been done by existing legislation on gaming. Are we so much afraid of public opinion, backed up by some members of the Turf Club, that we are going to introduce legislation for the purpose of removing restrictions which, I say fearlessly, have been of great advantage to the public? Bookmakers are a class that ought not to be encouraged. All the betting that a man wants can be got in Perth, where there are any number of persons willing to give him the odds.

THE SPEAKER: The hour fixed for the adjournment of the House has now arrived.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 6 o'clock, p.m., until the next Monday evening.

Legislative Council,

Monday, 20th December, 1897.

Motion: Standing Orders Suspension (remainder of session)—Immigration Restriction Bill: Message re Council's Amendments—New Houses of Parliament: Message, Assembly's Resolution—Early Closing Bill: first reading (debate)—Municipal Institutions Act Amendment Bill: second reading (moved and deferred)—Metropolitan Waterworks Bill: further report presented—Lady Broome Annuity Bill: first reading—Sharks Bay Pearlsell Fishery Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Bunbury Racecourse Railway Bill: first reading—Collie Quarry Railway Bill: first reading—Kalgoorlie-Gamullilla Lake and Boulder Townsite Loop Railways Bill: first reading—Public Health Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Papers presented—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 7:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom), in accordance with notice, moved:—

That, in order to expedite business, the Standing Orders relating to the passing of public Bills, and the consideration of Messages from the Legislative Assembly, be suspended during the remainder of the session.

The object of this motion, he said, was to further the business of the House. Every time a motion to suspend the Standing Orders was made, it was necessary there should be a majority of members in the House to sanction the motion. Unless notice was given of the intention to move the suspension of Standing Orders, and unless the motion was carried at once, there might be great delay in business. The present motion was not submitted with the intention of jumping surprises on members, or of trying to pass objectionable Bills. What he meant in using the term "objectionable" was that there were no Bills before Parliament likely to be strongly opposed by hon. members. There was little time now before Parliament prorogued, and there were several Bills which might be unimportant from a certain point of view, and could go through the various stages without trouble. Under these circumstances, he was induced to submit the present motion, purely with the object of expediting business.

HON. F. T. CROWDER : Before agreeing to the motion, it was desirable the Minister should give some assurance that second readings would not be taken on the same day as the Bills were introduced. No one was more anxious than himself to expedite business, or to help the Government; but he did not want to be placed in the same position as he was last session, when several Bills which hon. members had never seen or heard of were introduced and carried through all stages and became law, without any consideration. He objected to what he called "playing at legislation." If ever there was an argument why the Legislative Council should be wiped out, it was the way Bills were treated last session in this House. Bills were passed and members had no opportunity of even reading them. Hon. members should insist, before agreeing to this motion, that the Bills should be some time in their hands before the second reading was taken.

HON. A. B. KIDSON : These Bills had passed in another place.

HON. F. T. CROWDER : What had that to do with the question? Most hon. members, with himself, were willing to do all they possibly could to help the Government through, but we should consider the Bills which were placed before us. If the Minister of Mines would give the House an assurance that the Bills would not be rushed through all stages on the same day, he would vote for the motion.

HON. A. P. MATHESON agreed with the Hon. F. T. Crowder. After the experience we had had during the present session of the condition in which Bills came to this House, and the number of amendments it was necessary to make, hon. members would be lacking in the performance of duty if they consented to suspend the Standing Orders without some definite understanding from the Minister that second readings of Bills should not be dealt with or that Bills should not be taken into committee, on the same day they were introduced. It was impossible for members to consider a Bill on the day of its presentation; there being no time to turn up Acts alluded to in the measure, or to refer to previous legislation of a similar kind. There were a Bill for a Collie Quarry

railway; an Agricultural Land Purchase Bill; a Roads Bill; a Railways Bill; a Public Works Bill; and a Lands Bill; these being only the more important of the Bills which were to come before hon. members, and were certain to contain contentious matter.

THE MINISTER OF MINES : Was the hon. member sure these Bills would ever reach us?

HON. A. P. MATHESON : Judging by the Government majority in another place, one would think so.

THE MINISTER OF MINES : The hon. member was more sanguine than himself.

HON. A. P. MATHESON : Some of the Bills would require amendment, and it would be absolutely impossible for members to weigh the different clauses, if the first and second readings were taken on the same day.

THE MINISTER OF MINES : The object of the motion was to facilitate the carrying through of the business as quickly as possible. Hon. members knew that, if possible, it was desired to finish the business of Parliament before Christmas, and in these circumstances there was little time for delay. It was not right for him to make a promise that what hon. members had asked would be carried out. The fact of the Standing Orders being suspended did not stop hon. members from saying what should be done with a Bill. If a Bill came forward for second reading, hon. members could vote against it. The suspension of Standing Orders did not interfere with the rights and privileges of members, who could, if they thought fit, vote against the second reading of a Bill, or ask that progress be reported if in committee. If he (the Minister) were to make a promise, there might be a majority of hon. members in favour of carrying on the debate; therefore he would leave the matter with the House. There would be no danger in passing that motion. He could assure hon. members there was no desire on his part to rush any business through. He would endeavour to meet members in every way.

THE PRESIDENT : The suspension of Standing Orders was not fatal to the rights of hon. members, as in the different stages hon. members could do as they thought fit. The power of dealing with a Bill would still rest with the House.

Motion put and passed, and the particular Standing Orders suspended for the remainder of the session.

IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION BILL.

MESSAGE *re* COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

Legislative Assembly's Message, *re* certain of the Council's amendments, considered in committee.

THE MINISTER OF MINES moved that the amendments made by the Legislative Council in the Bill be not insisted on. He understood it was superfluous to put these amendments into the Bill, as he was informed that the object aimed at in these amendments could be gained by putting a condition in another Bill (Imported Labour Registry Bill) that would be subsequently placed before hon. members. It would not be wise, in the interests of the colony, to jeopardise this Bill, especially by inserting a condition which could be arranged for in another measure. This was an important Bill, being an attempt on the part of the Government to meet the views of the people in connection with undesirable immigration. The Government had taken this large step to meet the wishes of the public, and the Bill was framed upon the lines of a measure passed by the Legislature of the colony of Natal, which had received the royal assent. It would be useless to pass a Bill which would not receive the royal assent. The measure now before the House had been urged upon the Government, and it had met with approval in another place, the members of which directly represented the people.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Hon. members here did not, he supposed.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: Hon. members would be accepting a grave responsibility by putting conditions into this Bill which might cause it to be thrown out. He asked members to carefully consider the matter, and he did not think anyone could say there were undesirable conditions or clauses in the Bill. The only objection which had been taken to the measure was that it did not go far enough. Members should consider well before jeopardising the Bill. It must be remembered the amendments made by the Council were all bearing on one object, which could be gained in another way.

HON. A. P. MATHESON agreed with the remarks of the Minister of Mines as to the importance of not jeopardising the Bill, which did not go the length that many members wished, though it was a step in the right direction. He accepted the assurance of the Minister of Mines that a similar provision would be introduced into another Bill which would have the same effect.

THE MINISTER OF MINES said he was not in a position to assure the committee that these amendments, if made in another Bill, would pass, but he had an assurance that, at all events, such amendments would receive support.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It might be taken for granted that, if the amendments received the support of the Government, they would be passed. Under the circumstances he was prepared to support the motion that the Council's amendments be not insisted on.

HON. F. T. CROWDER supported the motion of the Minister. 'This Bill was one which the people of the colony had directly demanded—indeed they had demanded a Bill going much further. In the Imported Labour Registry Bill, now before the Assembly, similar amendments to those now in question had been inserted, and no doubt would be passed. When that Bill came before the Council, hon. members would have power to insist on their amendments. If the Assembly did not agree with these amendments, the Bill would lapse, and then the labour used on the Abrolhos Islands could be used as now.

HON. G. RANDELL said he was inclined to vote in favour of insisting on the amendments, but what the Minister had said had considerable weight with him. One difficulty was that the amendments in the Imported Labour Registry Bill might be disagreed to by the Assembly, and that Bill be finally wrecked; but, according to Mr. Crowder, under the old Act Messrs. Broadhurst, McNeil, and Co. could import labour as they had hitherto done on the Abrolhos.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: The amendments would come more properly under the Imported Labour Registry Bill.

HON. G. RANDELL: But there was a risk of the Imported Labour Registry Bill being wrecked.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: There was a risk in everything. The present Imported Labour Registry Act, if not repealed, would remain in operation.

MR. RANDELL said the Minister of Mines was not answering the question. Did the provisions of the present Act enable Messrs. Broadhurst, McNeil, and Co. to import labour as they had hitherto done, if the Immigration Restriction Bill were passed?

HON. F. T. CROWDER said he had put the matter before Mr. Walter James, professionally, and was assured that the Act did enable that firm to continue to import labour.

HON. G. RANDELL said he would offer no opposition to the proposal of the Minister of Mines; but he wished it to be understood that he voted for the motion in the expectation that the Imported Labour Registry Bill would become law; and that Messrs. Broadhurst, McNeil, and Co. would be able to import labour to the Abrolhos Islands, notwithstanding the Immigration Restriction Bill.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: The amendments were in the interests of the colony, and of the industry on the Abrolhos Islands. The amendments had been carefully considered by the Council, and ought to be insisted upon.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Without expressing an opinion as to the question asked by Mr. Randell, he intended to vote for the motion. The amendments were not of sufficient importance to induce hon. members to throw out a Bill which, as Mr. Crowder had said, had been asked for by the public of this colony for a long time past. The Premier, when in England, went to a great deal of trouble to obtain the views of the Imperial authorities as to the possibility of a Bill of this nature receiving the royal assent; and now a Bill had been introduced on the understanding that, if it passed, it would receive the approval of Her Majesty. The Council would be wrong were they to allow this Bill to be thrown out upon such a trivial amendment.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Not trivial.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: It was trivial in comparison with the importance of the Bill. The amendment only affected one set of persons, whereas the Bill affected the whole community. The few might suffer for the many, but he did not think

the few would suffer to any great extent, seeing that the Minister had intimated that the desired amendments would be embodied in another Bill, and passed.

THE MINISTER OF MINES again expressed a hope that the amendments would be made in another Bill, and not in this Bill.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: At any rate, the Minister of Mines had said the amendments would receive the support of the Government.

THE MINISTER OF MINES said he had stated that the amendments would receive support.

HON. A. B. KIDSON said he understood this to mean support by the Government.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: It was the hon. member who said "the Government."

HON. A. B. KIDSON: At any rate, the Minister had said the amendments in another Bill would receive support in the Assembly.

THE MINISTER OF MINES said he had not yet heard the views of all the members of the Government.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Clauses with the same object could, no doubt, be inserted in another Bill, and would receive consideration. If the Imported Labour Registry Bill was not passed with these amendments, that Bill could be thrown out or allowed to lapse.

Question—that the Council's amendments be not insisted on—put and passed, and a Message to that effect transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

MESSAGE: ASSEMBLY'S RESOLUTION.

A Message from the Legislative Assembly was received and read, as follows:

That this House having taken into consideration the report of the Commission appointed to select a site suitable for Parliament Houses, disagrees with the report, and recommends the site occupied by the Barracks in St. George's Terrace; in which resolution the Legislative Assembly desires the concurrence of the Legislative Council.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) moved that the House resolve into committee, for the purpose of considering the foregoing Message.

THE PRESIDENT: I ask the indulgence of the House, so that I may avail myself of the privilege of speaking on this

important question. I would like to express my views, and I can only do so as president of the Council, before we go into committee. Hon. members are aware that I was appointed one of the commission to consider this question. Unfortunately, owing to my absence from the colony I did not take part in any of the meetings, and owing to the report being laid on the table of the House on the first sitting day, I was precluded from adding my views, which I should have done had the report been held over until my return to the colony. This, therefore, is the only chance I have of expressing my views. I may state, in the first instance, that I am totally opposed to the views of the majority of the commission, that the Houses of Parliament should be built on the site of this building. The new building will, we all hope, be suitable to the requirements of the two Houses of Parliament. It would be impossible to erect a building containing all the necessary accommodation on this site. We would be infringing on the public gardens adjoining, an infringement which should be carefully avoided. This garden has been set aside for the public ever since my earliest recollection, and any project to curtail the garden would meet with the strongest remonstrance from the citizens of Perth. That, I think, prevents this site being taken into consideration in connection with new Houses of Parliament. There was one other site which suggested itself to me. That was the piece of land lately purchased by the Government on the other side of the street, facing, I think, the corner of Irwin Street and the Terrace and Hay Street. But there are objections to that site when the matter is looked into carefully. The ground lies rather flat, and Houses of Parliament built there would not present the appearance they should. We therefore fall back on the Barracks site. No doubt there are one or two objections to that site, but the advantages are far in excess of the disadvantages. The position is a commanding one, seen from all parts of Perth, and the only objection raised is the distance from the city. But that difficulty could, I think, be overcome. We know that at present there is a project before the City Council for tramways in Perth, and one of the proposed lines is along St. George's Terrace to the Bar-

racks; and when once tramways are in use, the distance becomes of no account whatever. The Houses of Parliament in the other Australian cities are some distance from the business centres. The Melbourne Parliament House is at the top of Bourke Street. In Adelaide the site is at the bottom of King William Street, and the site favoured in Sydney for the new Houses of Parliament in the future is out of the business portion. At Brisbane the Houses of Parliament are right away from the business centre. I have had opportunities of seeing the sites of all these Parliament Houses, and I can say, without contradiction, that the site on which the Barracks now stand is not further from the business centre of Perth than the Houses of Parliament in any of the other Australian colonies. I agree with the view taken by the minority of the Commission on this question, that the proper site of the Houses of Parliament for this colony is on what is known as the Barracks site.

Motion put and passed.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I move that the Message of the Legislative Assembly be agreed to. A really good site is most desirable for the new Houses of Parliament, and I cannot see that there is any room for two opinions as to which is the better site—that on which this House stands or the Barracks site.

HON. G. RANDELL: There is room for two opinions. I hold an opposite opinion.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: In one site there is a rising, commanding, and quiet position, whereas the present site of the Legislative Council Chambers is, to say the least of it, seriously circumscribed, and one on which a building of any pretension would not give any idea of its real value or merits. For half the money that would be spent in a building on the present site of the Legislative Council, a building on the Barracks site would show up tenfold. I do not know that I need waste more time in commending this motion to the House. Hon. members are just as capable as I am of making up their minds as to the relative value of the two sites.

HON. G. RANDELL: Does the Minister know where it is proposed to put

the Houses of Parliament on Barrack Hill?

THE MINISTER OF MINES: There are so many choice sites there.

HON. G. RANDELL: Tell us the exact site?

THE MINISTER OF MINES: I have not gone into details sufficiently to be able to do that.

HON. G. RANDELL: Therefore, you cannot pass an opinion.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: But the Government will naturally select the best. I am not giving my opinion with any antagonism to the site of the Legislative Council Chambers, beyond the fact that I consider the building which would represent the leading public institution of the colony, should have the best possible site. I am quite prepared to hear arguments on the other side, and I am entirely open to conviction; but from what knowledge I have at present I cannot conceive anything that could show me a better site than that of the Barracks.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I have much pleasure in supporting the motion. In doing so I am casting no reflection whatever on those gentlemen who gave a good deal of time and thought in coming to their conclusions as to the site for the future Houses of Parliament. This building of Parliament Houses, when once agreed upon, would not occupy Parliament for many years to come; and when we can afford to build, we should build Houses that will be a credit to the colony. I know of no site in this or any of the Australian colonies equal to that of the Barracks.

HON. G. RANDELL: The Parliament Houses are not intended to be where the Barracks stand.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I take it for granted that, after the expressed wish of Parliament, the Government will select the finest site for the building. No doubt the Government will keep the Barracks site until the day comes when the Government have sufficient money to erect a House creditable to this colony. Until that day arrives we can put up with the Houses in existence, rather than have a second-hand building which would reflect discredit on the colony. If the Parliament Houses are built on the site of the Legislative Council, the best part of the

building will be underground, and make no show whatever. As the President pointed out, one of the greatest objections to the present Legislative Council site is that the Parliament Houses would encroach on the Public Gardens, which are small enough already. No person desires that the recreation ground should be interfered with at all.

HON. G. RANDELL: There is a little fringe of unreality about this question, inasmuch as in the present aspect of affairs it will be years before Parliament Houses of any proportion will be erected in this colony. The Government would be almost criminal at present to attempt to spend a large sum of money in this direction. I may say that I had occasion to attend the Supreme Court to-day—against my will, of course—and I was struck, more particularly to-day than at any other time, with the present miserable place in which our judges are housed, and in which they have to do the business of the country, which is increasing day by day. To attempt to erect Parliament Houses, until such time as a Supreme Court has been erected, would be a criminal act on the part of the Government. I take this opportunity of asking the Minister of Mines to urge upon his colleagues—that is if they wish to save the colony from continuing under the disgrace of having the legal business of the country transacted in, I think I may call it, a barn—the sooner the Government recognise the necessity of building a Supreme Court, the better. I think I have stated the feelings of the members of the legal profession, and those who have to attend the sittings of the Supreme Court, when I say it is absolutely necessary in the immediate future that some steps should be made to undertake this important and necessary work. I thought this was an opportunity of speaking on this matter, before coming to the question of the site for Parliament Houses. I said there was some degree of unreality about this question, because, until the time arrives when the Government are prepared to erect Parliament Houses, years may intervene and changes of opinion may follow; and any resolution arrived at now by this Council or by Parliament will not bind any succeeding Parliament. But it is incumbent on me, as a member of the

Commission which sat to inquire into the site for the Parliament Houses, to give the reasons of those who were in favour of the site on which this building now stands. One of the reasons has been referred to by hon. members who have spoken and by the President—the proximity to the business of the city. That was one of the strong features in the case which decided a majority of the members of the commission to recommend the site on which the present Legislative Council now stands. It is eminently desirable that Parliament Houses should be as near as possible to the mercantile and business centres of the city, and near to the Government Offices. I think I have seen the places to which the President referred—at any rate I have seen the buildings in Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney, and they are close to the city. In Adelaide, the Parliament Houses are as close as they possibly can be to the great heart of the city. They are in close proximity to the central railway station, to the business premises, the banks, hotels, and other buildings. They are in a busy spot, and the intention is that they shall front two busy streets, the continuation to William Street going to North Adelaide, and North Terrace. In Melbourne, the Parliament Houses are in close proximity to the Government Offices, and are not removed from the business centre of Melbourne. They are not far from Collins and Elizabeth Streets. In Sydney, the position is somewhat different, but the Parliament Houses are not far from the business portion of the city. They face the Public Domain on one side and Macquarie Street on the other, and they are not removed far from Pitt and King Streets, and the other great business centres, while they are in close proximity to a large portion of the Government Offices. It will be admitted by every member that such proximity is a great public convenience. That was an important point which influenced members of the Commission in deciding upon the site. As to the site itself, I do not wish to disparage the site under Mount Eliza, but members are not quite aware where it is intended to put this building. It is intended to erect this building back from George Street or at the end of St. George's Terrace, and to have gardens in front of the building.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I think you are mistaken.

HON. G. RANDELL: We elicited that in evidence.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Whose evidence?

HON. G. RANDELL: It is intended to have garden plots and the ground ornamentally laid out with grass in front of the building.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Whose evidence do you refer to?

HON. G. RANDELL: The Government Architect's.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I think you are mistaken.

HON. G. RANDELL: The hon. member will agree to this, that it was intended to have ornamental grounds in front.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I will explain later on.

HON. G. RANDELL: I think I am correct in what I say. I am sure it is intended to have the building right back; and unless the hon. member shows the plans, I shall hold to my opinion. It will necessitate the back part of Parliament Houses being pushed right to the excavated bank of sand, which will make the position, as I may say, almost like a well. The building will be entirely removed from the influence of the sea breezes, which are so necessary to give us coolness, and from the many comforts which are necessary here. The building will be removed from the south-westerly and westerly winds, and the position will make the back part of the premises intensely hot. There was another reason which influenced me. It has been said that this building could be seen from every part of Perth. That I entirely deny. It will be found that if these Parliament Houses are erected on the spot so chosen, they will be hidden from view, and it will be impossible to see the building from the top of Mount Eliza, except the roof, while the only portion of the place that will be seen from St. George's Terrace will be the centre of the road and the footpath. Both sides being lined with trees, the building will be hidden. So much for that site. It is elevated, certainly, but if you want an elevated site, why not go to where the Observatory is, and place the building on Mount Eliza? The difficulty of access then will not be much increased.

Now I come to the site here, and I do not wish to argue at great length, because I know the general opinion is against me. The reasons which influenced me I believed were correct, and I believe are correct still. Hon. members in another place characterised the site where we are now sitting as a swamp. Anyone who calls this site a swamp does not know the meaning of terms. Government House is not in a swamp, and the Government buildings are not in a swamp.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: At what depth is the water under them?

HON. G. RANDELL: The water percolates under this building, we know. It percolates under Hay Street, and also under the Terrace, but very low down, and that would not interfere with the sanitary arrangements of the building. The Parliament buildings could be erected on this site with a nice flight of steps and a commanding approach, for which this site lends itself so admirably; and for every person who would see the building at Mount Eliza, one hundred persons would see the building here. It would be in the centre of the business portion of the city, being near the Post Office, which thousands of people visit every week; and the Parliament Houses would be passed and re-passed by persons going up and down the Terrace. There is another important feature, and it is that the façade would have a magnificent outlook over the Perth estuary. There would be a considerable elevation of three or four storeys in the back portion. The ground here lends itself to the erection of all the offices which would be needed, such as kitchens and cellars; and the frontage would interfere with the Public Gardens only to the extent of taking in the present wall. Such a façade would be far more extensive than that of the South Australian Houses of Parliament. There is excellent accommodation for all that is required on this spot for Houses of Parliament for the next hundred years, notwithstanding that we might make the same progress we have been making during the last five years. The remarks that have been made in reference to interference with the Public Gardens I would like to refer to. It is not likely that I should do anything to interfere with the gardens, as I was the very person who

rescued these gardens for the public. It was at my instance that a change took place in regard to these Public Gardens, when it was decided to improve and make them a beauty spot for Perth. I was one of the members of the first committee for the restoration of the gardens, and for preserving them for the use of the public. It is intended that the old greenhouses should be taken down, and the gardens be extended by means of the reclamations that are being carried out to the river foreshore. A retaining wall is to be built in the river, which will give to these gardens an area immensely larger than will be taken from them by the erection of the Parliament Houses on this spot. This site for Parliament Houses lends itself admirably for gardens, and the general public would not be altogether restricted from the gardens which would adjoin the Parliament Houses, and which could be made to form part and parcel of the Public Gardens of Perth. The Parliament buildings would not entrench on the present gardens very much, but would need to go only as far as the Fernery, if hon. members know where that is. These are some of the reasons which are important, and deserve consideration. I maintain that Parliament buildings should be erected where they will not be lost to view. On this site they would be close to the Public Offices, as well as to the Cathedral, the General Post Office, where men do most congregate; and, further, the Parliament Houses on this site would be observed by all observers. The altitude of the buildings would be considerable. They would be approached by a flight of steps, and the façade to the river would be visible from over the river on the South Perth side; and, in no sense, would they be hidden. Then this site is in close proximity to the business portion of the city, which is a very important thing. The proximity to the city and to the Public Offices is an advantage which should not be lightly sacrificed for a mere idea. There would, on the other hand, be more or less inconvenience by having the building on the Barrack-hill site. The reasons which influenced the majority of the Commission, in recommending the site of the Legislative Council Chamber, still exist; and, notwithstanding that public opinion is now against me, I believe this public opinion

has been formed to a large extent on false premises. It will not alter my opinion. I am open to conviction on any matter; and, before giving my opinion in this case, I was not aware of the opinions of my brother members of the Commission. I arrived at my conclusion after mature consideration, and I believe this site is far and away superior to any site for the Parliament Houses of the colony.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I think I was prepared for the emphatic utterance of my friend's views on this occasion, as on the Commission; and perhaps it is no breach of confidence to say that he expressed his opinion on the site before any other member, and he has stood loyally by his view that the proper site for the Parliament Houses of the future should be, what he declines to accept and which he will not accept as a swamp—the site on which the unhealthy building in which we are now sitting is erected.

HON. G. RANDELL: The healthiest spot in Perth.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I would ask hon. members, after sitting in this building for four or five hours what are their feelings?

A MEMBER: There is no ventilation.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The feeling is one of intense lassitude and fatigue, resulting in—(A MEMBER: Thirst)—yes, a thirst, which has a dangerous tendency of not being assuaged. I am especially sensitive to matters of ventilation and temperature, and I have seldom, to my mind, sat or spoken or worked in a building that tells me so decidedly that it is an unhealthy site, as does the site on which the Council Chamber is erected. My friend, Mr. Randell, dealt at length with the advantages of Parliament Houses being so placed as to be subject to all the dust and noise of the city.

HON. G. RANDELL: We hear no noise here.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: And the dust is increasing day by day. There is a freedom from dust, and there is isolation, on the site at the Barracks. The Minister of Mines has omitted to mention one point of the utmost importance—I mean that this building is exposed to the dust which sweeps up and down St. George's Terrace, and which would be destructive to the archives, papers, and books in a Parliamentary

building. I think Mr. Randell has at last explained what, to my mind, was wholly inexplicable before. I could never perceive why a man of his intelligence, and shrewdness, and common sense, which he generally brings to bear on most questions before the House, was so bitterly opposed to the Barracks-hill site. I did not gather it at the sittings of the Commission. The hon. member has evidently been labouring under a misunderstanding. The chief part of his speech was devoted to the extreme disadvantages of placing a Parliamentary building behind the Barracks, in the excavation under the sandhills at the back. My idea was that the Parliamentary building, instead of being sunk in that excavation, where, as the hon. member said, only the roof could be seen from the surrounding high land, should be erected on the rising ground at the back, and that the sandbank should be terraced into walks and grassplots, which was no doubt what the hon. member referred to, giving to my mind the very grandest approach to a building of this character to be found in the length and breadth of Australasia. The idea was that the barracks themselves should be removed, and gates be placed where the barracks now stand, so that at the ceremonies of opening and closing the sessions of Parliament there would be advantages for mustering the troops for receiving His Excellency, which now do not exist. From whatever point of view we take it, the site may be regarded as not only unique in Western Australia, but unique throughout the continent of Australia. I am not going to labour the point. I am sure this House is practically unanimous on the subject. I ask hon. members to picture to themselves a splendid building of this character raised on that hill, and approached by terraces: an ornament to the city; the cynosure of the surrounding country; surrounded by parks and terraces, to which the place lends itself most admirably. I think hon. members will agree with me that, if we have been fortunate in anything in the past, we are fortunate in this, that we have preserved a unique and splendid site for the Parliamentary buildings of Western Australia. A remark was made in another place by the Director of Public Works (Hon. F. H. Piesse),

that the Commission were compelled to accept this site on which the Legislative Council stands, because they were limited to the amount of £70,000. That is not correct. The first proposal was made by Mr. Randell, who stated that it would cost £40,000 for a noble building, as the hon. member put it. It was pointed out that £40,000 would give us two chambers only, and this amount was, after some discussion, raised to £70,000; but when the Director of Public Works set his architects to work, they produced plans for a building on either site to cost £138,000. That was practically the amount for building on either site. The advantage of the Barracks-hill site over the other is that the building raised on the top of that bank would be very imposing; whereas on this site of the Legislative Council Chamber, half the money would have to be sunk in preparing foundations and raising the building, of which the greater part would be almost below the level of St. George's Terrace. Hon. members know how the ground slopes behind us. It was proposed, in the Commission, that there should be a narrow frontage to St. George's Terrace, and that the façade should front the gardens, so that it would be shut out by the trees from view in the gardens, and if the trees were removed the gardens would be destroyed. On the east side the building would be nearly against Government House, shutting out all the air and light, for that is the airy side of the city. I could go on all night pointing out the disadvantages of this site and the advantage of the Barracks-hill site, but I do not wish to detain the committee longer.

HON. G. RANDELL: I have no recollection of having had anything to do with the proposal of a specified sum of money for the building of Parliament Houses.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: You mentioned £40,000, on the second day the Commission met.

HON. G. RANDELL: The hon. member may be right. With regard to the site, I may have misconceived the position, but I thought it was intended to put the building in the excavation. If it is not intended to do so, an enormous amount of money will be needed to level the sand. There is a very rapid rise to the Barracks. I do not know what the gradient is.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: One in twenty, I think it was stated.

HON. G. RANDELL: I think it is more than that—about one in six. The building would be away from the sea breezes, which are so pleasant at night.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Does the hon. member know that at the Observatory the temperature is two or three degrees cooler than in the city.

HON. G. RANDELL: I know it is cooler at my house in St. George's Terrace than at the Observatory. I do not wish to argue the question further, but I think that opinions may change between now and the time when the colony is prepared to erect Parliament Houses.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I entirely agree with the remarks of the Hon. J. W. Hackett. There is no doubt whatever that the Barracks-hill site is by far the finest that probably exists in any town of this colony. I say that, because that is how it strikes any person coming to this city for the first time. When I came to the colony, and looked around for a site to build my house, I came to the conclusion that the Barracks-hill site was the best for that purpose. Without a moment's hesitation I came to the conclusion that the Barracks site was the best for the purpose, and my disgust may be imagined when I found that it was not for sale. I think this subject has been approached in rather a narrow spirit and view of the situation. A considerable amount of discussion has been wasted on the cost of the building, and on the actual position of the site which the Houses of Parliament would finally occupy. I quite agree with the hon. member who stated that there was no possibility of those buildings being commenced for the next five or six years. In the meantime there is no necessity for us to discuss what the building will cost or its exact position. The fact remains that this site, for the purpose, is without parallel anywhere. From all sides it stands prominently in view, except perhaps from Subiaco and neighbourhood. I quite agree with what Mr. Hackett said about the plans for the proposed building on the site of the present Legislative Council. At least one-third of the cost of erection of buildings here would be entirely wasted, or, at all events, the results would be entirely invisible. Mr. Randell has suggested that it would do

very little harm to the gardens, because when the Court Houses were swept away it would be possible to extend the gardens to that extent.

MR. RANDELL: Further than that, a long way.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Possibly, according to Mr. Randell, down to the river frontage, but that would be absolutely impossible. Any business man must be satisfied that within the next six or ten years there will be wharves along the whole of the river frontage, and a railway connecting the whole of these wharves with the Government railway system. Nothing can stop that river frontage being lined with wharves, except the decline of the colony. Under the circumstances, I do not think it reasonable that Mr. Randell should take up the position that the gardens may be extended in that direction. Hon members, in discussing this question, all seem to have assumed that the business area of the city is going to remain confined to the small block between William Street and Barrack Street. That is an extremely small view to take of the possible progress of this city. I see nothing whatever to prevent St. George's Terrace throughout its whole length being utilised for business premises, in the centre of which there will be the Court Houses, for which I understand the Boys' School has been allocated, and then there would be the Post Office and Government buildings, and at the end of the Terrace, Parliament Houses.

HON. G. RANDELL: If you are right about the wharves, it would be absolute folly to put the Court House where it is intended to put it.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I understand it is intended to put the Court House on the site of the Boys' School. If that be so, there is a chance of St. George's Terrace becoming one of the finest thoroughfares of any city in the colonies. I hardly agree that the site of the existing Legislative Council Chambers can be called a swamp, but there is no doubt a clay band running immediately under this building, and that on the top of that clay band there is a perpetual run of stagnant water, if one may use that expression, which, though hardly logical, expresses the meaning that the water is stagnant until released, and then it flows

perpetually. When buildings were in course of erection at the corners of William-street and Barrack-street, the greatest difficulty was experienced in finding foundations owing to the swampy nature of the ground.

HON. G. RANDELL: That was a natural drain, years ago, and was a swamp all along there.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Under my present office building and on the other side of the road, there is, to my personal knowledge, a distinct series of springs. Just under the Weld Club exactly the same state of affairs can be found, and I see no reason for supposing that the same conditions do not exist under the present Legislative Council premises. Just beyond Government House grounds, you can find an actual swamp with water lilies on it.

HON. G. RANDELL: But what is the level of it?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Under all these circumstances hon. members will agree with me that the site of the Legislative Council is not a suitable site for extremely heavy buildings such as the future Parliament Houses are likely to be.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, report adopted, and a Message in accordance therewith transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

EARLY CLOSING BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly.

FIRST READING.

HON. G. RANDELL moved that the Bill be read a first time.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: If the second reading of the Bill came on the following day, there would be no time to table amendments, and he mentioned this in case objections might be raised to no notice having been given of amendments. There was no doubt this was a measure that required a lot of amending.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: If the second reading were taken on the following day, it would not follow that the measure should advance any further stage on that day.

HON. A. B. KIDSON said his only desire was that Mr. Randell should not be taken by surprise by any amendments which might be moved.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The Bill only required one amendment, and that amendment it would get. He desired to move that the Bill be read that day six months.

THE PRESIDENT: This was hardly the time to submit such an amendment. On the motion for the second reading would be the proper time.

HON. G. RANDELL said that, in all his parliamentary experience, he had never seen such a course adopted as that now proposed by Mr. Crowder---a course which was utterly and entirely unfair.

HON. F. T. CROWDER said he was not particular, and would move the amendment on the following day.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a first time.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING (MOVED).

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM), in moving the second reading, said: If hon. members judge this Bill by its length, it is an entirely unimportant measure. The object is to amend the Municipal Institutions Act with regard to the width of by-lanes. A second part of the Bill deals with the question of increasing the powers for borrowing, and a third part is one which I propose to add in connection with the powers of municipal councils in appointing and dismissing officers. The first part proposes to amend the 147th section of the principal Act. That section says that a street which is proposed to be a carriage road or carriage way shall have a width of 33ft., and a street not intended for that purpose shall not be less than 20ft. in width, but that a house built for human habitation on a lane or street of the width of 20ft. must also face another street of the width of 20ft. It is proposed to amend the Act so that no street shall be less than 33 feet wide, but the amendment also provides that there may be lanes or by-streets. When there is a frontage to a lane or by-street, there must also be a frontage to a street of not less than 33 feet in width. This means that if a person has a block of land which goes right through to two streets, each of these streets must be 33 feet wide. So far as I can see from the measure, it is permissible on the part of

the owner to make lanes or by-streets of any width down to the middle of a block to which the back premises may face, but under no circumstances can any premises face a lane or by-street unless it also faces a street 33 feet in width. By Clause 2 it is proposed to strike out of Section 166 of the principal Act the words "amount payable in respect of "rate, payable together with." The object is that a person appealing against his rate shall not be compelled, as under the present law, to deposit the amount of rate together with the fee, but only the fee, pending the settlement of the matter. Clause 3 repeals Section 185 of the principal Act in the following words:

Section 185 of the principal Act is hereby amended by adding the following thereto: "Provided always that the municipality of the City of Perth may at all times borrow on the credit of such municipality a sum not exceeding £250,000 in all."

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Is that all?

THE MINISTER OF MINES: That is all.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Good gracious!

THE MINISTER OF MINES: At present the borrowing powers of a municipality are, I believe, limited to ten times the amount of their revenue. By this amendment it will be seen that we are going to give the Perth municipality power to borrow £250,000. Hon. members are aware that this amendment received the greatest consideration from hon. members in another place. As a member of the Government, who seem to have concurred in this amendment, I cannot do otherwise than support the measure. We are told that a Government must be one.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Do you believe in the Bill yourself?

THE MINISTER OF MINES: This is a most important clause, and I hope hon. members will give it careful and un-biased consideration. Clause 4, which I propose to add to the Bill, amends Section 13 of the principal Act, in regard to which some little difficulty has arisen. Section 13 provides that the Council shall from time to time appoint a treasurer and any such other servants as are necessary, and define their duties, and may assign remuneration to such officers and servants, and may remove them for misconduct or neglect. It has been pointed out to me that it is very difficult to prove

misconduct or neglect; and every facility should be given to an important institution like a town council to discharge incompetent officers and secure good men. I therefore propose to amend the section by providing that municipal officers shall hold office only during the pleasure of the council.

HON. G. RANDELL: I move, as an amendment, that the word "now" be struck out, and the words "this day three months" be inserted in lieu thereof. I feel somewhat grieved at the course I feel compelled to take in regard to this Bill; but I hope to be able to justify that course to hon. members. Hon. members, if they were acquainted with the history of the Bill, would see the absolute necessity of the amendment. The Bill was introduced in another place with, I believe, two clauses. Reading the two clauses, one wonders at the undue haste in introducing this Bill. The mischief which it seeks to remedy has already been met throughout the whole length and breadth of the city of Perth; and there is no justification for a Bill of this description, with the third clause attached, being brought in at this late period of the session without any examination of its provisions by the public, or without being demanded by the City Council itself. I do not propose to deal with the provisions of the first and second clauses. My opinion is that these two clauses were introduced for the sake of the third clause, which was not declared when the Bill was first placed before the Legislative Assembly. It is possible this third clause may have been an after-thought; and one wonders why this Bill of two clauses, which deals with matters which could wait for, at any rate, six months, should have been introduced in such haste, when, as we know, the City Council of Perth are anxious to secure a number of other more or less important amendments in the Act. In several particulars this Act is not working to the satisfaction of the Council or the ratepayers; and I believe a long string of amendments has been prepared by the officers of the Council for submission to Parliament. The two first clauses appear to have been used as a peg on which to hang the third. Without these, the Bill might be considered a private measure, inasmuch as it only applies to the city of Perth, and does not embrace the other

municipalities of the colony. By the third clause it is sought to increase the indebtedness of the citizens of Perth to a very large extent. At this late period of the session, when, comparatively speaking, very little consideration can be given to what the result may be, it does not seem right to inflict on the citizens of Perth a large increase in the amount of their indebtedness, and consequently a large increase in the rates. At the present moment, take the city of Perth throughout, we are assessed at the amount of 25 per cent. of the rental value of properties. That of itself is a very considerable amount of rates to be raised from properties in the city, an amount that can only be justified in extreme circumstances; therefore I ask hon. members to pause before they agree to pass the second reading of this Bill, which was hastily dealt with in another place. I am surprised that the Government lent their influence to the passage of this Bill. The revenue of the city of Perth is between £39,000 and £40,000, and with judicious management and economy on the part of the council and its officers that is sufficient for all purposes.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That is the amount, leaving out the sanitary, rubbish, and health rates.

HON. G. RANDELL: That is the total amount, I believe.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: No; they are not included in that amount.

HON. G. RANDELL: That gives all the greater power to my argument. I do not like to refer in deprecatory terms to the conduct of the city business. Suffice it for me to say that for the last five years there has been a general feeling that the best has not been done for the city, and satisfaction has not been given by the work executed. It is only right that we should wait to see what is done by the new mayor and councillors; but, speaking of the administration of the affairs of the city in the past, it has not been satisfactory to the ratepayers, and I believe it has not been satisfactory to the members of the City Council themselves. This should make us hesitate before we give authority to add such an immense amount as £170,000 to the indebtedness of the city. We want to see if the works that are being undertaken are carried out wisely and

well. The City Council has a large revenue with which to deal, and I take it that it is practically understood that the deep drainage scheme has not been included in the programme of works submitted by the mayor. So far as I can understand, there has been no proper programme sketched out, also no plan formed, as to what is to be done with this loan. I believe we should have been told clearly what it is intended should be done with this money when raised. These are serious matters. It does not seem to me that there is any hurry for this small Bill. If we take the other matters contained in the Bill, besides the authority to raise money, they are of no pressing necessity. I hope hon. members will not allow legislation of this kind to be hurriedly dealt with at this late period of the session. Notwithstanding what has been alleged, that it is within the ratepayers' power to disallow the loan, the machinery of the Act is not satisfactorily carried out. Hon. members are aware that it is only by a majority of the ratepayers of the city going to the Town Hall and recording their votes against the loan that it can be defeated.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: One-third of the ratepayers.

HON. G. RANDELL: One-third of the ratepayers on the roll must go to the Town Hall and record their votes against the loan. If some different method were adopted, possibly the opinions of the ratepayers might be arrived at. There is another matter which should make us hesitate before passing this Bill. There has been a disposition on the part of the City Council to remove the names of the owners of property from the ratepayers' list, and to put on the names of those who have no vested interest in the country. To my astonishment the other day I found that my name was left off the roll of the West Ward because I was not the occupier of a house there, but I had a piece of land there irrespective of properties which are let. It is the policy of the Council to place the vote in the hands of the tenants. I was improperly removed from the ratepayers' roll. Once before the same thing occurred: I was away in England at the time. The case I instance is not an isolated one: a considerable amount of dissatisfaction has been caused through

this action. It is against the spirit of the Municipal Act to remove the ratepayers from the roll. Above all things, municipal government is supposed to represent the property of the city, when 4 votes, 3 votes, and 2 votes are given, according to the property held. The property owners have vested interests, and they should have a prominent voice in saying what should be done in regard to the management of the affairs of the city. I think I have said sufficient to show that it is not desirable, in the interests of the community at large or in the interests of the City Council, to pass this Bill. No scheme of works for which it is proposed to expend the money has been submitted. If after full and careful consideration the councillors can put before the ratepayers of the city a well considered scheme of works for the benefit and advancement of the city, sanitary or otherwise, then it would deserve consideration at the hands of Parliament. That has not been done, and we are asked to legislate to a considerable extent in the dark. We shall empower the City Council, if we pass this measure, to raise the indebtedness of the city to a considerable extent. I therefore, without saying more on the subject, move that the Bill be read a second time this day three months.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I venture to support the motion of my friend, the Hon. G. Randell, and in doing so I think no one will censure me at all events for being backward in the improvement of the city. I have set an example myself, and laboured hard and, perhaps I may be excused for saying, laboured gratuitously for its good in every direction; therefore I say I was astonished—more, I was astounded—when I perceived from a report that a Bill of the kind had been passed. It gave no indication of what was coming, it had been so amended in another place. It will fasten on the ratepayers of Perth the heaviest obligation in regard to numbers, known in Australia. I doubt if a parallel case exists anywhere throughout the world. I deeply regret to see that the right hon. the leader of the Government, though he has been attacked for excessive progressiveness in many of his public actions, but to my mind has shown himself a model of circumspection and caution in conduct.

ing the affairs of the colony, should have thought fit to support this proposal. I want to know why my friend, with words of gratulation and welcome on his lips, commended the mayor of Perth, who we know is a relation, for the step he had taken and the independent stand which the councillors had taken. The Bill proposes to give the city of Perth—alone amongst all municipalities in the colony—the power to exceed ten times its annual income. I ask why the Premier commended his brother, Mr. A. Forrest, for this attempt to plunge the city into a debt which it is absolutely unable to bear, and from which the towns of Fremantle, Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, and Boulder are to be free. I look into the question, and I entirely join with my friend, Mr. Randell, in the warm denunciation he has passed on the proposal put before the House. I noticed that the Minister of Mines, in introducing this Bill, carefully kept clear of alleging any grounds why the Bill should be passed. I challenge the recollection of any hon. member of the House whether the Minister led them to believe that he favoured the proposal, or that it was a good one for the city of Perth. What I want to know—perhaps the Minister will give the figures—is the amount of the income of the city. The Act says that the council shall be allowed to borrow up to ten times of its average net ordinary revenue. I want to know the indebtedness of the city, and the ratable value of the city, and what are the works contemplated to be carried out with the sum mentioned in the Bill? I want to know further how it is intended to meet the immense addition to the interest and sinking fund?

HON. A. B. KIDSON: More rates.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I presume so. Here we are asked to pass a Bill of this kind which is unknown in the history of municipal government in this or any other colony. I beg the House to take this point into their consideration. This enormous sum of a quarter of a million sterling—so much as is not already swallowed up in previous loans—

HON. F. T. CROWDER: That is £80,000.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That means that £220,000 is to be raised, and that will amount to about £12,000 a year in addition to the present indebtedness of the ratepayers of Perth. There was a

light and airy way in which the programme of works to be carried out was placed before hon. members in another place. I read the programme through carefully, and I found it is proposed to construct the roads from kerb to kerb, and the work is much wanted in Perth; to spend money on parks and gardens, and I venture to say that this is the first time in the history of Australia in which a loan has been asked for this purpose. Thirdly, part of the money is to be expended in a Town Hall, and I make the same statement about that. Fourthly, it is proposed to spend some of the money in connection with what the mayor of Perth called a deep drainage. He does not seem to realise what is the difference between deep drainage and deep sewerage. The money is not for sewerage. I ask hon. members to look into the matter for themselves. This deep drainage would not remove the nuisance of filth from the city. The major portion of the money is proposed to be spent in carrying, during three or four months of the year, the rain-waters under the streets instead of allowing them to run down the gutters. This proposal is not to carry filth from the houses, shops, factories, or large places of business, where there are large numbers of people employed, nor is it intended to be used to cleanse the back yards or stables: it is not to take away any refuse, but to form large channels, 6ft. high, of brick under the streets to catch the rain-water that falls during the months of June, July, and August. The sum of £100,000 is suggested by the City Engineer to be spent on this work, and this recommendation was warmly indorsed by the ex-mayor, Mr. Saunders; it received the sanction of the works committee; and it has been indorsed by the council. I have gone through these four points to lead up to this statement, that none of the works proposed to be carried out will be reproductive to the smallest extent. The city will not gain one penny from the expenditure on any of these public works, to provide a fund to meet the interest. That is a point which alone should be sufficient to condemn the proposal. I understand that my friend the mayor is agreeable to the amount being reduced from £250,000 to £150,000; that is that the loan debt of the city shall be £150,000 instead of

£250,000. Let me remark, in passing, that the clause in the Bill giving power to borrow the money goes infinitely further than hon. members suppose. It confines the borrowing power of the city up to £250,000: it will be impossible to go beyond that amount, although, in the future, it may be desirable to borrow more. If we agree to this £150,000 being borrowed, it means that £70,000 can be spent between this and July, when Parliament meets again, when further powers can be obtained. The City Council already have a large surplus of the last loan unexpended. Will the Minister tell me what the amount is?

THE MINISTER OF MINES: I do not know.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Perhaps the Hon. F. T. Crowder can tell me.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: It is not in my department.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Can any hon. member tell the amount? I think it is £100,000, if they like to borrow up to their powers.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I think it is £30,000.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I can assure the hon. member they can borrow double that. The Act states that any municipality can borrow up to ten times of its net average annual income. If hon. members will look at the *Government Gazette*, at page 2,671, there is set out the general revenue under the Perth City Council. Then let us take the *Gazette* of a year ago, so as to comply with the Act, which says that the average of two years shall be taken. The total amount of the net ordinary revenue is set out as £18,639. That is the revenue from the general rate, which includes rents, licenses, building permits, jetty dues, fines, hire of roller, and a few other items. A year ago the revenue from the general rate was £11,500. That amounts to £30,000. The council are allowed to borrow up to ten times of that amount. These figures I have had a day or two, and I have pointed out to the mayor that the council can now borrow up to £150,000. The Council were not aware of their borrowing powers.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The income of the City Council last year was £39,000.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The income was over £60,000 last year, including the

sanitary rate, rubbish service, and local health rate; but the general rate, which includes rents, licenses, building permits, jetty dues, fines, and hire of roller, comes to £18,000. If the council wait another year, they will be able to borrow a quarter of a million under their own Act. The clause relating to the loan has been introduced without consideration. My warm-hearted and impulsive friend, the mayor of Perth, jumped up in the Assembly and proposed it without consideration, and my equally warm-hearted and impulsive friend the Premier, eager to do anything for the city, jumped up and said "Well done, good mayor; I congratulate you upon your public spirit." No consideration was given to the matter at all. The one argument that is used is that the city has a right to raise and spend what it likes. Then what is the use of the Municipal Act at all? It would be as well to repeal the 185th section of the Municipal Act, if that argument is to be used. Let us give the council a free hand in everything they do, we shall be wiser but poorer. I beg to point out that this enormous sum, unknown in the history of municipal government, when we consider the population, will be expended on unproductive works, and the ratepayers will have to put their hands in their pockets to pay for that £70,000, in addition to what already lies waiting for the mayor and council, if they only like to pass a resolution to go and borrow, and insert the ordinary advertisements. It may be said that the vote of the ratepayers has to be taken into account. Can anyone speak of that without a smile? If one-third of the ratepayers do not come forward and vote against the proposal, the loan goes through. It would be impossible to get a third of the ratepayers to come forward. The city council, for some unexplained reason, have taken good care that the large ratepayers, or the great bulk of them, should be struck off the roll. I belong to a firm which pays some hundreds of pounds in rates, paying, as we do, all our tenants' rates. When I presented myself to vote at the last mayoral election, I was told I had no right whatever to vote. I asked how that came about, and the officer said, "Oh, the city council struck off all firms and all joint-

stock companies." And it is on a roll so mutilated that the House is now asked to mulct the larger ratepayers to the extent of £12,000 a year in addition to the present rates, for purely unproductive works.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I do not entirely agree with Mr. Hackett, and I may ask Mr. Randell whether he considers it necessary to sacrifice this Bill, instead of striking out Clause 3, and allowing the amendment of the Minister of Mines to pass, and Mr. Hackett to move his amendment.

MR. RANDELL: I have no objection to that.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I should like to oppose the striking out of Clause 3, but I consider it would only be a waste of breath, after the remarks that have been made by Mr. Hackett and Mr. Randell.

Amendment—that the Bill be read this day three months—put and passed.

REPORT—METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS BOARD

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom), in presenting a reply from the Metropolitan Waterworks Board, forwarded by the board in consequence of a resolution of the Council adopted on the 9th December, said it would be remembered that a short time ago a debate took place in this House in reference to the Metropolitan Waterworks Board's report, and that a motion was carried, and a paper circulated (by a member of the Council) in connection with that report. A reply had been received from the board, and he now moved for leave to lay on the table of the House the further report of the Metropolitan Waterworks Board.

Put and passed.

HON. A. B. KIDSON moved that the further report be read.

Put and passed, and the further report read.

HON. A. P. MATHESON asked whether the document read was in reply to questions which the House had agreed with him should be asked.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: No. The replies received from the board, relating to the questions referred to by Mr. Matheson, were separate from this further report. The manager of the board had asked that the document now read should

be placed on the table of this House; and it was for the House to say whether or not the document should be received.

Ordered that the further report do lie on the table.

LADY BROOME ANNUITY BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

SHARKS BAY PEARLSHELL FISHERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

BUNBURY RACECOURSE RAILWAY BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

COLLIE QUARRY RAILWAY BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

KALGOORLIE-GNAMBALLA LAKE AND BOULDER TOWNSHIP LOOP RAILWAYS BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the Minister of Mines, and read a first time.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER OF MINES: 1. By-laws of the Metropolitan Waterworks Board. 2. Metropolitan Waterworks Board, further report requested by the Council on 9th December, 1897. 3. Water supply of goldfields, reports by Government Geologist.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until 3 o'clock p.m. the next day.

Put and passed.

The House adjourned at 10:15 p.m., until the next day.